detected by the fingerprint sensor into digital electrical signals.

2. (Amended) A flat information recording/processing device [that is characterized by having] comprising a thin fingerprint sensor [for detecting fingerprints], a memory unit [that stores the] configured to store fingerprint data detected by the fingerprint sensor as registered fingerprint data, and a fingerprint matching unit [that compares] configured to compare newly detected fingerprint data with the registered fingerprint data stored in the memory unit.

3. (Amended) A flat information recording/processing device [that is characterized by having] comprising a thin fingerprint sensor [for detecting fingerprints], a memory unit [that stores the] configured to store fingerprint data detected by the fingerprint sensor as registered fingerprint data, and a fingerprint matching unit [that compares] configured to compare newly detected fingerprint data with the registered fingerprint data stored in the memory and [outputs] to output a ["Yes"] signal indicative of when there is a match of the fingerprints in the comparison.

6. (Amended) A flat information recording processing device [that has] comprising a portable information recording unit equipped with a thin fingerprint sensor [for detecting fingerprints], a first memory unit [that stores the] configured to store fingerprint data detected by the fingerprint sensor as registered fingerprint data and a second memory unit in which user-specific information is kept, and an information processing unit that is equipped with a fingerprint matching unit [that compares] configured to compare newly detected fingerprint data with the registered fingerprint data stored in the first memory

unit and a display unit [that displays] configured to display the user-specific information stored in the [above-mentioned] second memory unit and information processing unit [which can display the above] configured to display the user-specific information in the [above] display unit when there is a match of fingerprints.

7. (Amended) [The] An information recording/processing unit [described] in accordance with claim 6 [above] in which the information processing unit [is capable of reading out, writing in, and rewriting] is configured to read out, to write in, and to rewrite [the] information stored in the second memory unit of the information recording unit.

9. (Amended) A machine/system control device [that is characterized by having] comprising a fingerprint sensor [for detecting finger prints], a fingerprint matching unit [that compares] configured to compare fingerprint data detected by the [above-mentioned] fingerprint sensor with pre-registered fingerprint data, and a control mechanism [that controls] configured to control [the functions or] operation of the machine/system control device [according to] in accordance with [the] user-specific information [specified by] in accordance with a sensed [the] fingerprint, when there is a match of [fingerprints] fingerprint data with pre-registered fingerprint data.

10. (Amended) A machine/system control device [that is characterized by having] comprising a fingerprint sensor [for detecting fingerprints], a first memory unit [that stores the] configured to store fingerprint data detected by the fingerprint sensor as registered fingerprint data, a fingerprint matching unit [that compares] configured to compare fingerprint data detected by the [above-mentioned] fingerprint sensor with [the]

registered fingerprint data stored in the memory unit, and a control mechanism [that controls the functions or] configured to control operation of the machine/system control device [according to the] in accordance with user-specific information [specified] corresponding to [by] the fingerprint, when there is a match of [fingerprints] fingerprint data with the registered fingerprint data.

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING NEW CLAIMS

13. A flat information recording/processing device in accordance with claim 1 further comprising a second memory unit in which specific information about each user is stored.

14. A flat information recording/processing device in accordance with claim 2 further comprising a second memory unit in which specific information about each user is stored.

15. A flat information recording/processing device in accordance with claim 1 in which the fingerprint sensor is a surface pressure input type sensor.

16. A flat information recording/processing device in accordance with claim 2 in which the fingerprint sensor is a surface pressure input type sensor.

17. An information recording/processing unit in accordance with claim 6 and further comprising a second thin fingerprint sensor and a third memory unit configured to store fingerprint data detected by the second fingerprint sensor as registered fingerprint data.

18. A machine/system control device in accordance with claim 9 in which the user-specific information is age.

19. A machine/system control device in accordance with claim 9 in which the fingerprint sensor is a surface pressure input type fingerprint sensor.

20. A method for accessing a database, said method comprising the steps of:

registering fingerprint data in a memory:

pressing a finger of a user on a fingerprint sensor module to offer a fingerprint; and

conditioning access to the database on a match of the offered fingerprint to fingerprint data in the memory.

21. A method in accordance with claim 20 and further comprising the steps of:

reading identification data from a memory of an information recording/processing device carried by a person, the data read including fingerprint data;

pressing a finger of the person on a fingerprint sensor module to obtain a fingerprint; and

comparing the obtained fingerprint of the person to the fingerprint data read from the information recording/processing device.

22. A method in accordance with claim 21 and further comprising the step of displaying a verification when the obtained fingerprint of the person matches the fingerprint data read from the information recording/processing device.

23. A method in accordance with claim 22 and further comprising displaying specific information about the person verified.

24. A method in accordance with claim 21 and further comprising the step of updating information stored in the memory of the information recording/processing device.

25. A method for controlling access to a vehicle, said method comprising:

placing a finger on a fingerprint sensor module of a remote control module;

transmitting minutiae data of the fingerprint to a receiver mounted in the vehicle;

comparing the minutiae data to data stored in a database of registered drivers; and

conditioning opening of a door of the vehicle upon a match of the minutiae data to data stored in the database of registered drivers.

26. A method in accordance with claim 25 and further comprising the step of limiting a speed of the vehicle in accordance with a matched registered driver.

27. A method for identifying a individual comprising the steps of:

recording fingerprint data of the individual as registered fingerprint data in a memory unit of a flat information recording/processing device;

sensing a fingerprint of the individual on a fingerprint sensor of the flat information recording/processing device; and

comparing the sensed fingerprint of the individual to the registered fingerprint data using a fingerprint matching unit of the flat information recording/processing device.

28. A method in accordance with claim 27 further comprising the step of generating a signal from the flat information recording/processing device indicative of a match of the sensed fingerprint data and the registered fingerprint data.

29. A method for controlling operation of a machine comprising the steps of: